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Seven-day Meditation Retreat
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Transcription from Audio Recordings

File 3a – Monday morning guided meditation

So take a few deep breaths into the belly. You're probably feeling a bit more settled now; settled in the sense that you're not questioning so much what you're doing here, what's going on. You can't bypass that period, that first day or so of a retreat – you can't really bypass anything in this practice. There are no shortcuts.

You're here because you *want* to be here, not because anyone's forcing you to be here. I can give you advice on what to do but really it's up to you – everything is up to you.

This is a tried-and-tested practice; thousands of people over thousands of years have been doing this – and it works. Maybe not everyone will become enlightened or want to become enlightened. But doing this there will be deep changes in your life: much more acceptance, much more equanimity, much more love, real love – not attachment, but love. You're doing this because you want to live your life as an authentic human being, and I can say through my own experience this is the way to do that.

There is a deep fear about who you will become – “Who am I?” and I often say you never find out who you are – that's not the question. It's not about you. And that's what happens; it stops being about you.

There's just now. There's just this. There's just this absence, the absence of wanting anything in particular. That might not sound very attractive but once you start to feel this real absence you just want more and more of it. But of course this doesn't sound very attractive to your mind. So I often wonder what I can say and do to keep you going in this. But all I can say is just keep sitting, trusting this.

A lot of you have been coming to these retreats for a long time. So something must be happening, something is attracting you to this. It's because there is more absence in your life, in you – more space. And you don't want to keep filling up that space with things, with thoughts.

So never give up. Keep watching. And whatever you see is not it. Whatever you feel is not it. It's what you don't see, what you don't feel.